1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

seems to show that colour-blind men, or rather males of colour-blind families, had colour-blind descendants more often than perhaps might have been expected if the Todas are in practice quite as promiscuous as their social regulations allow them to be. The record of the affinity of the colour-blind suggests that in spite of the theoretical promiscuity, the husbands are, in practice, very often the fathers of their children.

A few histories of individuals may be given as examples of the various marriage customs which have been described in this chapter. One of the most married of Toda women is Puvizveli of Kusharf (65). She was married in infancy to Singudr (55), of the same clan as Sinkòrs, the mother of Puvizveli, and the two were probably the *matchuni* of one another, though only in a distant way. Puvizveli was taken from Singudr by Madsu and Koboners (58), who gave for her three buffaloes. From them she was transferred to Kangudr of Piedr (62), it being arranged that he should pay eleven buffaloes. Soon after joining Kangudr, Puvizveli became ill, and since there is a prohibition of marriages between the clans of Piedr and Kusharf, it was agreed that the pair should separate, and the woman was taken by Tütners and Etamudri (58). The eleven buffaloes had never been paid by Kangudr, so Tütners and his brother gave their buffaloes directly to Madsu and Koboners, but only four instead of eleven. All these transactions took place while Puvizveli was still young, but by her new husbands she had a son who died soon after birth. During her second pregnancy, she was taken by Perpakh and Tebkudr (68), who gave six buffaloes. The transference took place before the *pursiitpimi* ceremony had been performed. Perpakh gave the bow and arrow, and the daughter since born is regarded as the child of Perpakh and Tebkudr. Puvizveli has also a Tarthar *mokhthodvaiol*.

Edjog of Kuudr (56) was married in infancy to Nargudr (62), the son of her mother's brothers, and therefore her *matchuni* in the nearest sense. From him Kiudners (70) and his two brothers took her for five buffaloes. Kiudners died

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

159 851 58

before the buffaloes had been paid, and Edjog was taken by Mavòdriners (65), who arranged to pay the five buffaloes to Nargudr. He did not do so, but after having a son by Edjog, he sent her back to the father, paying a *kwadr* of one buffalo. So far, Nargudr had not received his five buffaloes, but he now obtained them from Kaners and Kudrievan (63), who took the woman although she was the granddaughter of their sister Narskuti. The marriage met with disapproval among the Todas on this account, though there does not appear to be any definite regulation against such a marriage; and at the time of my visit Edjog, a young woman of about twenty-seven, was still the wife of the two old men, aged about seventy and sixty-seven respectively.

Kuriolv of Kuudr (52) first married Punaveli (65), by whom he had two children. He then took to live with him Pilimurg (7), a Tarthar woman, giving to Pepners (44), the husband of the woman, fifteen buffaloes. Though Pilimurg is only legally his *sedvaitazmokh*, Kuriolv treats her as a wife. She lives at one of the Kuudr villages, while Punaveli lives at another. Pilimurg has had one son, Meilitars, since she has been living with Kuriolv, and Kuriolv always speaks of the boy as his son, though legally he is the son of Pepners, and his name will be found in the genealogies among the children of this man.

Recently Kuriolv has also married Sintharap (68), sharing her with Onadj (57), of the same clan as Kuriolv, but belonging to a different family. Sintharap has had three children, for the first of whom Kuriolv performed the *pursüitpimi* ceremony, and since no one has performed this ceremony for the succeeding children, they are also regarded as the children of Kuriolv. One of these children was Sinerani, whose funeral ceremonies have been described.

Kuriolv's son, Kulpakh (52), married Toridz (65), sharing her with Kiladrvan (60), of the same clan as Kulpakh, but of a different family. At the first pregnancy Kulpakh gave the bow and arrow, and was regarded as the father of that child and of two succeeding children who were born while Kulpakh was alive. After the birth of the third child Kulpakh died,

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

and Toridz has since continued to live with Kiladrvan and has had two more children. Kuriolv, the father of the dead man, succeeded in preventing Kiladrvan from performing the *pursiitpimi* ceremony before the birth of either of these children, and consequently they are regarded as the children of the dead Kulpakh and belong to Kuriolv's division (*pòlm*) of the clan and not to that of Kiladrvan. Here, by virtue of the *pursiitpimi* ceremony, a dead man is the legal father of two children who are known to be really the sons of his fellow-husband.

In the preceding cases the people belong to the Teivaliol. Among the Tartharol there are similar histories.

Pupidz of Kwòdrdoni (35) was married in infancy to two brothers, Kalgeners and Kinagudr, belonging to the same clan as the mother of Pupidz, so that she would probably have called them *matchuni*, though they were not nearly related. From these boys Pupidz was taken by Patser (26), who gave for her three buffaloes. From Patser she was taken by Siriar (20) for five buffaloes. Some time later Pepob (44) wished to marry Pupidz, but both she and Siriar were unwilling to be separated. Pepob, however, persuaded the council to arrange that he should have the woman for three buffaloes, and soon after five or six men carried off the woman by force, entering Siriar's hut at night. Two of the men held Siriar while the others carried off his wife, who became pregnant by Pepob, but Siriar, who had been trying to get back his wife, succeeded when she was about at the sixth month. The hand-burning ceremony had already been performed, but Siriar gave the bow and arrow, and is therefore the legal father of the boy born afterwards, although Pepob is known to have been the real father. Siriar had to give Pepob eleven buffaloes, though he had only received three, and had given five to the previous husband.

Nanbarvan of Kars (7) first married Pothenir (47), by whom he had one son. Nanbarvan went to England with a party of Todas, and Pothenir then married Kutadri, Nanbarvan's first cousin. On his return from England, Nanbarvan married Sindod (38), by whom he had a second son. Then he fell ill, and in consequence sent Sindod away,

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

159 and since that time he has had no wife, though he claims
851 that Iraveli, his brother's wife, is also his. There seems to be
58 no doubt, however, that he does not live with his brother in the same way as in most cases of polyandry, and is a wanderer with no regular home of his own, but I could not discover the cause of this.

159 A dispute about a marriage was in progress while I was
627 on the Hills, which I did not understand completely, but it
851 appeared that Oselig (24), who had been first married to
58 Teigudr (4), was then taken by Punog (14). Punog was said to have treated his wife badly, and to have failed to perform his duties when there was a funeral in the family of Nertiners, the brother of Oselig. He had not given the proper *pödri*, nor had he taken part in the cloth-giving ceremony, so Oselig ran away from him and took refuge with her brother. After a month Punog demanded back his wife and also twelve buffaloes which he had left with Nertiners for grazing purposes. Nertiners refused to send back his wife, and returned only eight of the buffaloes. He also proceeded to arrange that Oselig should marry Udrchovan (36), and Punog accused Nertiners of having got up the whole quarrel in order that Oselig should make this marriage. The matter was referred to the council, and it was decided that Oselig should become the wife of Udrchovan, but I did not hear for how many buffaloes, nor how the other disputes about buffaloes and *pödri* were settled.

At this time Udrchovan had another wife, Pandut (45). She had been the wife of Udrchovan and his brother Popners from infancy, and after having three children, who died young, she had been sent away and Udrchovan married Kavener (3), while his brother married Silkot (10). Later Kavener was taken from Udrchovan by Kudrvas (11), and Udrchovan remarried Pandut, who in the meantime had had two other husbands.

159 To the foregoing accounts, which I give as exceptional
584 and not as typical examples of the uncertainty of Toda
595 married life, I add one taken from the book published by
851 Captain Harkness in 1832, p. 121. The notes are added by myself.

l: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

The History of Pinpurz Kutan

159 584 595 851

"I was not seven years old, when my father, taking a child's garment, in value about a quarter of a rupee, and selecting one of the best of our herd, desired me to accompany him to the morrt[1] of Kinōri. This Kinōri had, a month or two before, a daughter born to him. Soon after we had arrived at the morrt, it being understood that Kinōri gladly consented to the propositions which had been made by my father, I was directed to bow myself down, and in the presence of the whole family to ask his foot. This I did; and touching it with my forehead, the buffalo and the garment were presented him, and I was considered to be affianced to his daughter. We remained there for some days, during which period it was agreed upon, what number of kine I was to receive in dower, on my intended spouse coming of age, and we again set out to return to our own morrt. I had no brothers, or they also would have been affianced to my intended, as this was part of the agreement, in case of my father having any more sons born to him. In this case Kinōri's daughter would have been wife to us in succession as we arrived at manhood, and we should have formed one united family—the supreme authority, however, still resting with me. The next year, my father presented to my intended bride a garment, double in value to the first which he had presented, and in each succeeding year, one proportionately increasing in value. We also sacrificed a buffalo, and presented a kutch[2] on every occasion of a death among any of the relations of my intended's family, and one also at their obsequies. In case of any accident of the kind in our family, we expected the same to be observed towards us, except the presenting of the kutch, from which my bride's father was exempted on account of the dower he had to give with her, which would greatly exceed in amount any expense which I could be

[1] This is evidently the same word as *mortk*, which occurs in Chapter XIV as a word for village.

[2] This is the *kuch*. Harkness states that it was generally a piece of dyed or printed cotton as at present.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

159 to my father. My father died, and when I had attained
584 man's estate, I was not pleased with my betrothed; and
595 presenting her father with three kine, the contract was by
851 mutual consent dissolved. Had the reverse been the case, and the bride or her father had declined to allow of consummation, I could have claimed of the latter a fine equal to fifty kine, and till this fine was paid the former could not marry any other. Freed from my contract with my first bride, I sought to affiance myself in a manner more to my own inclinations, and wishing to be connected with the family of my present wife, Pilluvāni, who was then only six years of age, I spoke to her father, and, obtaining his consent, presented her with a garment in value, according to her age, of about a rupee and a half, and a milch buffalo. I continued to present her with a garment every succeeding year; and on the occurrence of a death among any of the relations of her family, and at the obsequies, I always sacrificed a buffalo, and presented the kutch. Pilluvāni was afterwards betrothed to two others, Khakhood and Tūmbŭt. When she had arrived at a certain age, and had for eight days been living with one of her female friends in a dwelling separate from those of the family,[1] intimation was sent to me, and I went to her father's morrt, that is, Kerjwan's, her second father, the first one being dead. I was feasted and bedded; and after a few days, Kerjwan, laying on his hands, gave us his blessing, and I returned with my wife to my own morrt, receiving with her in dower four buffalo kine; her father also presented to her on this occasion a pair of ear-rings, a pair of armlets, a necklace, a brazen salver, and five rupees.

159 "Now, according to our customs, Pilluvāni was to pass the
595 first month with me, the second with Khakhood, and the third
851 with Tūmbŭt; and the two latter, waiting in succession on the father-in-law, were to ask his blessing and claim their privilege in right. I was to give her raiment the first year, Khakhood the second, and Tūmbŭt the third. I had the option of claiming the first three children, Khakhood the second three, and Tūmbŭt the third three; when the option again revolved to me. It was my place to go to her father

[1] This is a custom of which I failed to obtain any account.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

two or three months prior to the birth of a child, and, delivering to him a small piece of wood, which we call a billu,[1] to claim the forthcoming infant, whether male or female, and acknowledge before him and his relations that I would protect and nourish it; and that, whatever might happen, I allowed this to be in satisfaction of one of my claims. On this occasion, also, I was to present him either five or ten rupees, and in return he was to allow me to select, if I presented him five rupees, three; if ten rupees, six of the best kine of his herd. If the child proved a boy he would have to present me with a heifer, and another one also on the birth of each son, but not on the birth of a daughter, as it is supposed that she will soon be betrothed, and that a fortune will accrue to her in that way.

"After the third birth the same observance and privilege would have fallen to Khakhood and Tümbüt successively, or if I chose to give up any of my rights the two latter would successively have had choice of adoption, &c., &c. We all three should have been equally bound to protect the whole of the children, to marry, and to give them in marriage; but the superior authority would always have rested with me.

"The case of Pilluvâni and myself, however, was at variance with this custom. We were very fond of one another and determined not to separate. I offered to pay the usual fines, but the other party would not accept of them. I had been unfortunate. A murrain had attacked my herd; the greater part of Korrorr,[2] and which belonged to my fathers, had been forsaken by the Marvs and Cüvs,[3] from the oppression of some of their rulers, and from being a leading man among my own people I was now reduced, but principally by the oppressions of my wife's relations, to comparative poverty."

[1] This is evidently due to misunderstanding of the *purrüpini* ceremony. The Tamil word for 'bow' is *vil*.

[2] Probably Kerade.

[3] Badagas and Kotas.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

Kuriolv, they are too old or infirm to serve. Kuriolv is still on the *naim*, and his influence is entirely predominant, and it appears that he has been instrumental in altering the constitution of the council very largely. The number of representatives has been increased, and the following were the members in 1902: —Kuriolv and Ivievan (52) of Kuudr, Perner and Tebner (68), of Keadr, Parkeidi (21), Paners (23) and Siriar (20) of Taradr and Pidrvan (9) of Kars. Thus several members of the Kuudrol and Taradrol are serving, while there appears to be no representative of the Nòdrsol; and I was told by several Todas that Perner and Tebner are on the council because they are friends of Kuriolv, though, as members of the Keadr clan, they have no right whatever to the position. 623

On the slopes below the hill called Mirson, near Paikara, there are the remains of ruined walls marking a place where the *naim* used to meet. This place is called Idrgûdipem, and seems to have been at one time the chief meeting-place.

At the present time the *naim* meets anywhere. I have seen the council sitting in the compound of the bungalow at Paikara and on one occasion, when I was working in a bungalow at the Ooty Club, the *naim* sat in the grounds of the club. In general, they now meet at the places which happen to be most convenient for the chief members.

The members usually sit in a semicircular row. If they are considering a dispute between two parties, representatives of the parties take part in the sitting, and in these cases the members of the *naim* sit in the middle of the row while the representatives sit on either wing. 623 627 578

During my visit the council was chiefly occupied with the various complicated transactions which are always arising out of the custom of transferring wives from one man to another. This custom is the chief source of disputes among the Todas, and at times the *naim* may sit for several days before one case is settled.

I am doubtful whether the *naim* should have a definite head, but at the present time it certainly has such in the person of Kuriolv of Kuudr. He is the senior representative of the *manikudupel* of Kuudr, and is therefore the natural representative of this clan on the *naim*. He is highly intel- 623 159 555 176

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02)1906 Toda

623 ligent, and gave me the impression that he might have risen
159 to a high place in any community. He has the reputation
555 among the Todas of being very eloquent and of having great
176 persuasive powers. When persuasion fails, there is very little doubt that he resorts to intimidation of some kind, though I could not discover what his means of intimidation are.

FIG. 60.—KURIOLV AND PILIMURG.

On one occasion the *naim* spent a whole day discussing a marriage case in the compound at Paikara. On the following day they met in a distant part of the hills to continue the discussion of the case, and I was told that this was arranged by Kuriolv because he hoped to enforce his wishes in some secluded spot more effectively than in the publicity of Paikara where the evidences of the 'government' probably lent moral support to his opponents.

However Kuriolv effects his purpose, there is no doubt that

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

he almost entirely dominated the Toda people at the time of my visit. We have already seen that he has succeeded in altering the constitution of the *naim*, and several examples are given in this book of his interference in the normal course of Toda affairs; interference usually in favour of his own family or friends. In at least one case (see Chap. XVI) during my visit he considered himself superior to ceremonial laws.

He seemed to me to afford an excellent example of the process by which one man may bring about considerable changes in the laws and regulations of a community; though I was told in several instances that the Todas would revert to their old customs as soon as Kuriolv died.

I did not obtain a full account of the duties of the *naim* and of the affairs which come under its jurisdiction. There is no doubt, however, that it is largely concerned with the settlement of civil disputes arising between individuals, families, and clans. As I have already mentioned, it seemed to me that it was almost exclusively engaged during my visit in the regulation of the disputes arising out of the *terersthi* custom. In one such case the question of funeral contributions was involved, and I have no doubt that the settlement of any dispute arising from this source would come within the province of the *naim*, and probably any doubtful point in the working of the social regulations would be submitted to it.

In addition to its functions in disputes between individuals, the *naim* has wide functions in connexion with Toda ceremonial. It decides when many ceremonies take place, and has the chief word in regulating the affairs of the *ti* dairies. Thus it appeared that the various arrangements and alterations of arrangements in connexion with the migration of the buffaloes of the Nòdrs *ti* which were made during my visit were the work of the *naim*, or, at any rate, of its chief members.

Crime

I have no knowledge about the power of the *naim* in criminal as opposed to civil matters. I never heard of inquiry by the *naim* into any criminal offence committed by one man against another or against the community. It is, however,

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

618 At present there appear to be seventeen males and fourteen
621 females, but it is probable that these numbers are not complete. There are two *kudr*, headed by Kiurvan (32) and Atcharap (34). The former has three *pòlm*, of which the chief men are Puner (31), Kiurvan (32), and Orudz (33), and the latter has two *pòlm*, headed by Atcharap (34) and Kudar (35).

This clan seems now to occupy only two villages. One is Kwòdrdoni (Kodudonnemand), where there is only a *tarvali*, though there was formerly a *wursuli*, now ruined, in which was kept a *mani* called *Kirsongg* which has disappeared. The other village is *Katikar* (Kodanadmand). The male funeral place is *Iudi*, and the female, *Punmud*.

PÄM

This is a clan which formerly occupied the site of Coonoor and Wellington. Its numbers are small, probably only seventeen males and thirteen females. There are two *kudr*, headed by Udrchovan (36) and Pungievan (37). Udrchovan's *kudr* has only one *pòlm*. Pungievan's *kudr* has three *pòlm*, of which the chief men are Pungievan (37), Arparners (38) and Seili (39).

234 The original *etudmad* of the clan was *Pirspurs*, the site of
621 which was used for the Coonoor racecourse. *Päm* was then adopted as the chief village, but it has been allowed to fall into ruins, though still giving its name to the clan. The dairy at Päm was called *Palikûdrbeds* and the buffalo-pen, *Tûghdron*. *Inikitj*, where the people now live, is an uninteresting village at which there are the ruins of a *tarvali*. There is a building in which the four or five sacred buffaloes (*naskperthir*) are kept, but they are not milked as there is no *palikartmokh*.

764 The male funeral place of this clan was *Puvi*, and the female, *Kwatkash*. These were situated where the Wellington barracks now stand, and the funerals are now held near Inikitj. Fig. 51 shows the wooden *teiks* at which the sacred buffalo would be killed at the funeral of a male.

618 There are several stories about Karnisi (37), a member of
159 this clan. He is said to have been an exceptionally strong

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man, and the Todas tell how on one occasion two English soldiers came to Păm and insulted the women and how Karnisi took the two men unaided to the barracks at Wellington.

Karnisi also spent a fortune which had been stored in the dairy of Păm for many generations. A vessel (*pun*) full of rupees had been deposited in the dairy by an ancestor of Karnisi called Kiuten. It remained there till Karnisi spent it in buying buffaloes, ornaments for his many wives and household goods. He gave some of the rupees away and spent others in travelling to Coimbatore, and in a short time the money had disappeared.

NIDRSI

The headquarters of the Nidrsi clan are to the south of Coonoor. The people are closely surrounded by tea estates and have been much influenced. It is not now a large clan, having about sixteen male and twenty-five female members.

There are two *kudr*, headed by Todrigars (41) and Kudrmaskutan (43) respectively, each *kudr* having two *pòlm*. The chief men of the *pòlm* of one *kudr* are Puveners (40) and Todrigars, and of the other *kudr*, Kadrkutan (42) and Kudrmaskutan.

This clan affords a very good example of the degeneration which has in some cases befallen the dairy organisation. The people have only one *wursuli* left. The dairy (*wursuli*) has fallen into ruins, and they have no *wursol* and, therefore, the one buffalo is not milked. At a funeral of a male they will have to procure a *wursol* from another clan to kill this buffalo.

There are two *mani*, called *Eshkiakudr* and *Eikudr*, each with an iron chain, but as they have no *wursuli* these bells are kept under a stone at Akirsikòdri, the male funeral village. The other sacred buffaloes, *pinsipir*, &c., are milked at a *tarvali*.

There are now only four inhabited villages, and only one of these seems to be of any importance.

Nidrsi. This is near the Badaga village of Hulikal. It

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melqarsh Village]

614 554 Tardharsh woman coming out of a post-confinement seclusion hut, permission not to shave their heads after funerals as other Tardharsh do, etc., which definitely make them feel apart, if not superior.

361 614 621 The name of the clan is derived from that of its chief *mad* which is situated practically within the very town of Ootacamund, in the vicinity of Government House and the Botanical Gardens. Other *mads*, four in number but not always inhabited, are spread out over the Nilgiris, the principal one after Melgarsh proper being Kakhwurkh, south of the Ootacamund-Gudalur road, at the 8¾ mile.

361 621 [121] The *etumad* (chief village) was chosen as the object of this study, because it was occupied almost exclusively by one family group, whose characteristics made it eminently suitable for the study of polyandry and of the upbringing of children in so unusual a setting. Situated at an altitude of 7,500 feet, it was a typical Toda settlement, consisting of four houses (*arsh*), a large buffalo pen in which the animals belonging to the various individuals of Melgarsh were kept, and extensive grass expanse for early and late grazing, a *tarvali* dairy-temple, two water streams (one for the house, the *ordh* or *arsh nipa*, and one for the temple, the *pali nipa*, as is customary) and a small adjacent potato field which the local government officials had insisted on the Melgarsh people cultivating.

[312] [244]

A plan of the *mad* as described above is given in Fig. 18.

621 The family principally in occupation of the *etumad* consisted of three generations of Melgarol, there being two sets of polyandrous fathers, that of the grandfathers and of the fathers and seven small children in the last generation, whose ages ranged from fourteen years to newly born; there were, besides, two pairs of twins among the younger children, each made up of a boy and girl.

The genealogy of these people is given in Table 22.

Living together with this family, and closely related to them, were also other Melgarol, whose houses were, however, not the same. In Table 23 I give the genealogy of Nodzer's descendants, the widow Odzel being a resident of Melgarsh.

Then came the more distant relatives, as shown in Tables 24 and 25.

Now, let me give a short, personal description of each of the individuals living at Melgarsh at the time of my study (in italics in the above genealogical tables). We will begin with the eldest and finish with the more distant relatives also residing in Melgarsh.

[159] (1) Odzel: She is an old lady, very quiet and retiring, the oldest of the *mad*, who mixes very little with the others and spends her days

[text continues on p. 280]

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melgarsh Village]

159 621 mainly sitting in the sun or, when it rains during the monsoon, in the house in which she lives. She is remarkable for a protruding front tooth; the children do not go near her, and she occasionally receives visitors of her own age from other *mads*.

[614] [754] (2) KARNOZ: Aged sixty, he is the chief of the Melgarsh clan. A sly, nasty old man, he is reputed, as I have said, to be a *pili* (sorcerer) and is universally disliked and feared, even by his own brothers. I have already told the tale of how he became head of his *modol* by ruthlessly eliminating Ujar and his family (see p. 266).

(3) Kupidz: She is a white-haired widow who, after the deaths of her husbands and children, has returned to live out her remaining years with her brothers and their family. She is a most charming person, always with a smile on her face, partaking of the life of the *mad*, doing odd jobs here and there to help, and is a great favourite of the children, whom she loves. She is an inveterate beggar, and is always coming to me for clothes, spectacles (for her bad eyes), medicine and *bakshish*; but she is so jolly and nice about it that I find it very difficult to say no to her.

[135] [123]

(4) PADS: Two years younger than Karnoz, his elder brother, he is of a shy and mild disposition. He is a gardener in the Ootacamund Botanical Gardens which occupation is somewhat of a departure from Toda tradition. He, nevertheless, does not give up his pastoral duties, and takes an active part in tending the buffaloes with the others, outside his working hours. For his work in the Botanical Gardens, he will dress in non-Toda clothes, but every evening on coming back to the *mad* he dons the tribal *putkili* without which he would not dream of carrying out his Toda obligations. He is now the head of the family, Karnoz having taken a new young wife, and it is obvious that Silidz and the children look upon him with affection, if not perhaps with much consideration.

[464] [291]

(5) Silidz: She is a hard-working housewife, worn and withered prematurely by too much devotion to her domestic duties. She is fifty-five, but appears older. She is always busy about the house, cooking meals, fetching water, stitching the clothes of the others, even feeding the pariah dogs on left-over scraps of food. It was with the greatest difficulty that I was able to interrogate her, as she always pleaded that she had no time to spare for me. She is, however, of a charming disposition, never complaining and always willing to do anything which is asked of her, even by the small children who quite scandalously take advantage of her good nature.

[124]

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melgarsh Village]

(6) Nalsirwurf: The young wife of Karnoz, whom he took in 1945, thus putting an end to the polyandrous arrangement with Pads. She is twenty-five years old – thirty-five years younger than her husband. She is a beautiful woman, probably the handsomest of the whole tribe, and knowns it. She assumes languorous, indolent airs, which give her a certain amount of added attraction, as it suits her dusky, classical features, and figure, but I was unable to make out if this behaviour was due to a deliberately studied poise or if it was the result of her life with Karnoz which, as was to be expected, is not a happy one; the old man is far too domineering and matter of fact with her, while obviously very proud that he has taken her to wife. 159 621

(7) MUTNARSH: An ugly, hard-working, intelligent and willful man, the real head of the whole family for which he selflessly works very hard. He is devoted to his wife and children and would do anything to assist them. When I first met Mutnarsh (after the birth of the two last twins) he struck me as being unreliable and unpleasant; but after I had got used to him, I came to appreciate his outstanding qualities as a husband and father, and developed considerable respect for him. He too is a gardener in the Botanical Gardens. [464]

(8) KUDDHUE: A cripple, aged twenty-five, ten years younger than Mutnarsh. He cannot walk upright, the broken joints of his knees keeping him from extending these, and obliging him to walk with them constantly bent. The story which his family tells is that, as a child, he was sitting on the wall of the buffalo pen, when Kali (the Indian goddess of destruction) in the form of wind threw him down and broke both his legs. He is extremely ugly, with a wild look in his eyes, but on the other hand, he is exceptionally good-natured and happy, and is very attached to the children who do not, however, return his affection. He is nearly always employed as a priest, if not in the *tarvali* of the Melgarsh *mad*, in the tribe's *wursulis* for which he is very much sought after. [732] [793]

(9) MUNDOKWUTN: The youngest brother of the trio, aged nineteen. When I was in the Nilgiris ten years earlier, he was only nine, but already a polyandrous husband of the brothers' common wife, Erzigwuf. He is still only an overgrown boy, very athletic and strong, a great favourite of the children with whom he behaves more as a big brother than as a father. He takes an active part in the tending of the buffaloes, and is never far from the *mad* where he apparently likes to stay. [595]

(10) Erzigwuf: The embodiment of motherhood, aged thirty, she is one of the few fertile women of the tribe (there were one hundred Toda women who were sterile at the time of my stay in 1949). As she is so [842]

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melgarsh Village]

central a figure in this family, her story should be, I think, a bit elaborated. She was born a member of the Pan clan of the Tardharsh moiety, the daughter of a woman called Monkiz of the Kiaror *modol* and officially of Tinmarsh, and a man of Pan. I say "officially" because actually Monkiz already had a husband, Ürshen of Melgarsh, by whom she was expecting. But, as is very usual with the Todas, she was carried off by Tinmarsh when he heard that she was with child and, after due compensation had been paid to Ürshen, he gave her the bow and arrow in the *putsütpimi* ceremony. Monkiz died soon after, and the newborn Erzigwuf was more or less abandoned, her father going off with another woman who did not care for her at all. She would have died had it not been for Terzivel, her paternal grandmother, who took her to the *mad* Natersh and looked after her. At a very early age, as is the Toda custom, she was married to her *matchuni* (cross-cousin), Kishkil of Kiaror. When she came of age, she was married to Alvurvishk of Karsh, who paid six buffaloes to Kishkil in compensation for taking her away. She had no children by this husband, who actually died soon after the wedding. He was succeeded by Mutnarsh of Melgarsh and his brothers, her present husbands. She at first had four still-born children, for which the family roundly abused her; she was very depressed by this and wanted to commit suicide, but could never actually bring herself to do it. Then she went to Palani in the plains (a Tamil temple famous for its pilgrimages) and made a vow to the deity. Soon after, she was again expecting, and this time she gave birth to her first son, Pershrörsh. Then she had the other two children, and again went to Palani as, after Pengalam, six years passed without her having any more children. Mutnarsh went with her, and they both prayed in the temple, she for a boy and he for a girl, each without knowing about the other. The result was Sodup and Sodam, a pair of twins which the Todas consider very unlucky (in olden days one of them was immediately put to death). In this case, however, the *teuol* (Toda seer) when consulted told them that it was all right, because obviously their wish had been fulfilled after she and Mutnarsh had, in ignorance of each other, prayed for a child of different sex. They later returned again to Palini, and the twins which were born when I was at Melgarsh came, it was called, as a result of this last pilgrimage. How they were received will be narrated below. Erzigwuf had a lover, Kalorst of Pier, for some time (two years), as is the custom with Todas, but eventually Mutnarsh quarrelled with him and he left. She seems very happy in her present family life, and is always surrounded by her children who cling to her like chicks to a hen.

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melgarsh Village]

(11) PERSHRÖRSHWUTN, abbreviated to PERSHRÖRSH: The eldest boy of the family, and very conscious of it. He is quiet, self-confident and has a reputation of being "good with buffaloes", of which he is noticeably proud. He likes to go out to other munds, and to take the Melgarsh animals to graze in distant places, so that he is not very often at the *mad*. He always walks about with a stick, the symbol of his activities as a herdsman. 159 621 233

(12) NARJILKHWUTN, abbreviated to NARJILKH: Always busy about the house, where I usually found him cutting wood; he also looks after the calves, it being his special job to take them out in the morning and put them back in the pens in the evening. He is quiet and thoughtful and apparently specially friendly with Munbokwutn, his youngest father.

(13) Pengelam: A sweet little girl, with whom I was especially friendly. She is gay and playful, and is nearby always in the company of Narjilkh. She loves to muse to herself, to play imitating games, to sing and tell stories to the twins. She also likes to show off to people like myself, laughing and giggling when she plays at nursing her younger brother like a mother. She adores going for drives with me in the car, and cried her eyes out when I left the Nilgiris. 159 621 [123]

(14) SODUP: An extraordinary little boy for his age. He is exceptionally bright and intelligent and can speak fluently his own language. He is the spoilt darling of the whole family, often performing to a whole circle of grown-ups, who go into fits of laughter over the things he says. He is quite aggressive too, threatening his mother with disembowelment, and assuring everyone that he can manage the calves just as well as Narjilkh. He obviously derives much pleasure from taking advantage of the privileges Toda men enjoy, strutting with great satisfaction beyond the stone which marks the limit of where women may go in the direction of the dairy-temple, and where his twin sister must stop. [855]

(15) Sodam: She is as dull and backward as Sodup, her twin brother, is bright. I was unable to make out if this was congenital or due to different upbringing and the lower status of women among the Todas. She is very shy indeed and would hardly ever let me get close to her without starting to cry. She can hardly speak, and only very rarely opens her mouth, usually just sitting by her mother and staring with great round eyes at what goes on around her, and looking quickly away if any notice is taken of her.

(16) PETEROZN: Called after me (*Rozn* being Toda for Raja = Prince) who am his godfather, having taken that role at his name-giving ceremony. He is only a baby in arms, born two weeks after I arrived [123] [551]

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melgarsh Village]

159 621 in the Nilgiris in 1949, and spends his time wrapped up in his mother's *putkuli*, where he happily sucks her breast to his heart's content.

(17) Unnamed girl: She, the twin of Peterozn, lived only twelve days.

(18) SINGARSH: A great, black-bearded Toda, he stalks about, long and lean, swathed in his *putkuli*, nearly always watching the family's buffaloes. He is silent and serious and appears to be very conservative. [276] He takes snuff and rarely goes to the bazar, his usual sorties being reserved for the visiting of other *mads*. He is very fond of Sodup and often takes him out with him, wrapped up under his cloak, perched on his left forearm. He has been seen to laugh heartily at times – although this is rare – at the things that Sodup says.

(19) SINGUD: Also of the silent type, he is a good-looking man, clean-[464] shaven except for a short moustache. He is a forest guard of the Madras [291] Forestry Department, and is usually in uniform and away on duty from Melgarsh. When he does come home, he immediately dons the Toda *putkuli* and lends a hand with bringing in the buffaloes or taking them out.

(20) Amoniwuf: The common wife of the two brothers above. She is always busy with the household, if not her own, then that of Silidz, [837] whom she helps a lot. She has a cicisbeo, a Teivilkh of Teir *mad* of the Kusharf *modol* who comes to see her regularly, he having been accepted by the husbands.

(21) MOTSOD: A very lazy man. He spends his days sleeping either in front of the house or on the grass before it. He is middle-aged, handsome, with a fine grey beard and light coloured eyes, but so apathetic that it is really surprising. He occasionally puts in a spell as a priest at the *mad*'s *tarvali*, but never for long. He also sometimes accompanies [233] the boys on grazing expeditions with the buffaloes (when they migrate to other more distant grazing grounds), but very quickly returns to loll about the precincts of the *mad*.

(22) Isam: His wife, a colourless woman, who keeps very much in the background and consorts principally with Odzel and Silidz.

(23) PILKHLIVOWUTN: A rather sheepish, shy young man, in his early [464] twenties, who is also a gardener in the Botanical Gardens. He is not often at the *mad*, as his duties appear to keep him very busy. He seems just as slow as his father, although slightly more active. He usually has a silly grin on his face; he is clean-shaven with a downy, budding moustache.

(24) KIRSHARSWUTN: A very young fellow, about the age of Pershrörsh, and is a great friend of the latter. The two of them delight in

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melgarsh Village]

being with the buffaloes and are usually put in charge of the grazing of the herd. He too is reputed to be "good" with the animals. 159 621

(25) Närshmali: A lively and comely young woman, who keeps her household very tidy. She is always washing herself or doing her hair, in full view of everybody, which she seems to enjoy. She pours water over herself from a pot with her undergarment on, tightly tied under her armpits, it is true, but she very often lets it slip when drying herself, with exclamations of consternation, as if it were an accident. She is quite a flirt at Toda gatherings, and I have seen Pilkhlivowutn have to search for her in the bushes of a *shola* and drive her home again with a stick. Her second husband, Porshwutn, a mere boy, is never much at home. I was amused, however, to see him and his elder brother one day when Närshmali had actually really run away from them, complacently attending to the household chores themselves and, they said, just waiting for the *terershti* buffaloes that were their probable due to be paid to them. [832] [837]

(26) Pufvkiaroz: The only son of the notorious Toda Pebob who spent his time carrying off other men's wives, this man had an unhappy childhood. Both his mother and father died when he was very small, and there was nobody really left to look after him. It is said that surviving members of his father's family wanted to drown him as a useless mouth, and that he was saved from this premature death by Miss C. F. Ling of the Church of England's Zenana Mission. She brought him up to be a Christian, but when he came of age he is reported not to have accepted Christianity and to have returned to the Toda religion. He is a weak-chinned, thin man, with a resigned and apathetic look on his face, but recognized by the other Todas as knowing more than they because of his earlier association with the Christian Mission. For this reason, he has been appointed a member of the Collector's Toda Welfare Committee and he does everything that he can to assist his brethren. He also works as a gardener in the Botanical Gardens. [847] [797] [464]

(27) Mutmali: After Nalsirwuf, probably the second best-looking Toda girl. She is an inveterate flirt and has run away from her husband many times with other men. Somehow, however, she always returns after some days, without Pufvkiaroz exerting himself in any way. Last time I saw this happen, he simply carried on with the housekeeping himself, while assuring me that it would not be long before Mutmali came back. This proved to be true, and some five days later she was again at Melgarsh, sulking somewhat, and offering no excuse, but already having taken up the household chores again. [832] [837]

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melgarsh Village]

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a boy of the Pan *modol*, which made her one of the clan for the afterworld. She was consequently cremated at the Pan cremation ground, with a further display of grief and lamentation.

ADDENDUM

Observation of the children's behaviour

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While having necessarily to question the Todas at times, principally in order to obtain explanations of things which could not simply be observed, but also in order to get as many results as possible within the few months that I was in the Nilgiris, I managed, all the same, to do quite a lot of pure observation of their everyday behaviour, without disturbing them too much, I think, by my alien presence. The very fact, however, that I was there, upset the family pattern of usual activities. This is a problem which I am sure other anthropologists have had to contend with, but for which I, for my part at least, found no really satisfactory solution. Thus, for instance, the Melgarsh people, the Melgarol, very quickly discovered that I was interested in the children. They consequently would play them up for me as much as they could as soon as I arrived. Sodup, who was really an exceptionally amusing and bright child, was specially singled out for this, and greatly encouraged to be "funny" in my presence. I believe, nevertheless, that he would have been the darling of Melgarsh anyhow, as many of his pranks, as far as I was concerned, were his own genuine invention and were definitely not suggested by those around him.

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Some of the things he said and did were quite remarkable and of considerable psychological interest. Thus one day (May 2nd, 1949), he started off to tell how his father (Mutnarsh) was wonderfully skilled in the art of catching buffaloes by the horns (as is the practice at Toda funerals: see Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 349). His mouth puckered up; his eyes flashing, and waving a small cane in his hand, he went on to show how he, Sodup, treated the calf which had been entrusted to his care. He said it drank too much milk and that he had to beat it to stop from doing so. Switching to another subject, he told us how a rat had made a hole in the house in which he lived, and how he had watched it go through that hole. He came back to the calf theme very soon after and began illustrating the way he beat the calf by running after the girls present: Pengelam, Mutmali and Nārshmali. Pretending to be very frightened, they ran away from him with laughter and cries, which were intended, of course, to encourage him even more. Sodam, his twin sister, looked on from her mother's side, with great round, frightened eyes.

After the funeral of his ill-fated little sister, Sodup indulged in the following antics. He began by telling us that the surviving baby cried too much, and that it had better beware, as the other one had been taken away dead, by the scruff of the neck (?) to a funeral. Changing the subject abruptly, he said that his uncle Singarsh was too often in the bazaar and

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melgarsh Village]

not enough at home; he threatened to tie him to the house so that he be compelled to look more after the buffaloes. With gestures and cries, still wagging a stick in his hand, he showed how he would lead the buffaloes at the next summer migration to greener pastures. When an Indian visitor turned up to have a look at the Todas, he exclaimed that he was tired of visitors, and that they should not be allowed near the *mad* (the Indian looked at me for some time, and then, intrigued, asked: "What is this work?" which may or may not have provoked Sodup's remark). He pointed to my bungalow on the opposite hill, and said he wanted to go there. Then he picked up a bit of discarded tinfoil and ran about, throwing it into the air.

A few days later I found him in the same boisterous mood. He started pulling at the clothes of Singarsh and beating his legs, and when tired of his victim, had the effrontery to do the same to Karnos, which was quite unusual. Nobody really minded, however, and there was much laughter. He then set upon Kupidz, his grandmother, pulled her hair and bit her, and even tried to undress her. He endeavoured to throw stones at the on-looking women, but stopped short at that. He picked up the empty Glaxo tin, and loudly proclaimed that it was he who had bought it for the new baby in the bazaar.

One of the most difficult things to collect from the Todas was dreams. They somehow sensed that there was something intimate about these and would not disclose them, although they were quite willing to speak openly and publicly about sexual matters. During the whole time I was in the Nilgiris in 1949, I was only able to get Motsod to give me one of his dreams, an insignificant one; and to obtain another one from Sodup. This was to the effect that he dreamed that a big bear had taken his mother away, and that it had mauled her badly, so that she was bleeding profusely from the left shoulder (Erzigwuf fed her children mainly from the left breast, because it was "more convenient", she said). He saw the bear carry his mother past the Warthuttiarsh, on the left side. He said that he was not sorry at all. (I noted that when Sodup was "naughty", Erzigwuf threatened him by saying that he would be carried off by a bear.)

One other day (August 14th, 1949). Sodup astounded me during an afternoon session by suddenly exclaiming to me in English: "Hey! you bugger!" Asked where on earth he had learned this, Kanvarsathi said it was from British soldiers on leave from Madras, but considering that we were then in 1949, that the British left India in 1947, and that Sodup was only two and a half years old, either he had a remarkably retentive memory, or Kanvarsathi's explanation was not correct. Anyhow, Sodup seemed perfectly aware that this was a rude expression, not meant to please me.

The contrast between the twins was extremely marked. Sodam hardly ever left her mother, and preferred to stay indoors. Erzigwuf told me that she had been difficult in this way ever since it had been necessary to use force to vaccinate her some time ago. When scolded she would sulk for hours, while Sodup, who had made no difficulty about being vaccinated, "forgets at once". It was obvious that exteriorized aggression was a very marked component of the little boy's character. In a film which I made

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

[Melgarsh Village]

159 of the family, he can be seen threatening his father, Mutnarsh, with a
[126] gesture of his uplifted hand.

The other children were also quite different. They were older, of course, but their mother said that they had never been like Sodup. Pengelam
[854] would often take Peterozn from her mother and carry him around in her arms, singing delightedly to him in an enraptured voice. Once I saw her
[276] attempt to smoke the butt of a cigarette discarded by an Indian visitor, and Munbokwitn, in one of his rare displays of authority with the children, took it forcibly away from her, and said angry words to her about it (Todas do not usually smoke, but take snuff instead).

159 In the Rorschach tests which I took of Pengelam, she showed more
776 fantasy than any other Melgarsh inhabitant. Thus for Card V, she said the ink blot looked like a flying devil. She assured me that she had seen
[125] such a one when returning from the cinema three weeks before. It was sitting on a tree, and her mother told her it was a devil. Amoniwuf said so too. It looked like an eagle, and she was frightened, but Erzigwuf and Amoniwuf were not. What frightened her, she said, was the knowledge that the devil could throw a stone at her. A month ago, one such devil had thrown a stone at her as she was coming back from attending the small calves, and she had been hit on the foot. Another time, a similar devil threw a burning stick at her from a tree in the Botanical Gardens, near the Melgarsh *mad*. Her father, Mutnarsh, she said, also used to be frightened of devils many years ago, although he is no longer so. The devil usually smells at the feet to see if the person is afraid; if it detects fear in this way, it will deliver a blow, but should the person show no fright, then it will not harm him.

159 Narjilkh was a quiet, hard-working lad. He did not express much, and even when questioned answered only with reluctance. He was learning to
[868] cook, and to milk the buffaloes, as well as the ritual of the *Polkhli*, as some day he will have to be *tarvalikartmokh*, *wursol* and even *kaltmokh* at the *ti-mad*. I usually found him cutting wood in the morning, logs that Mutnarsh had brought in from the forest before going off to his work in the Gardens. Narjilkh's most usual companion was his youngest father, Munbokwutn, for whom he seemed to have a kind of brotherly love. The two of them were always out together with the buffaloes and apparently got on particularly well.

As for Pershrörsh, I did not have much opportunity to watch him, as he was away most of the time. When he was at home, he struck me as being the favourite of his mother, a quiet, silent boy of undoubted ability
[834] as a herdsman. He seemed quite intelligent, and as reported earlier, because he was suspected of already having a girl friend, looked upon with
[614] a certain amount of consideration by the rest of the family. It was while questioning Erzigwuf about him that I discovered about the maternal descent groups of the Todas, the *polkhliol*, as she was obviously shocked at my suggestion that Mutmali might be his girl friend. "No, no", she said emphatically, "that is impossible! They belong to the same *polkhliol*!" For he, through his mother, is a descendent of Monikidz of Kiaror (26) and she of Karner, also of Kiaror, although Erzigwuf herself is from the Pan *modol* as Mutmali is of Konorj.